

## THE EXECUTIVE

15 AUGUST 2006

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

This report is submitted under Agenda Item 15. The Chair will be asked to decide if it can be considered at the meeting under the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a matter of urgency in order not to delay the progression of regeneration and leisure service proposals.

REPLACEMENT OF DAGENHAM SWIMMING POOL	FOR DECISION
<p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>This report considers four options regarding the replacement of Dagenham Swimming Pool which are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. No replacement</li><li>2. Replacement on Beacontree Heath Site</li><li>3. Replacement in the Leys</li><li>4. Replacement in Central Park</li></ol> <p>If the replacement of Dagenham Swimming Pool is a priority then the existing site at Beacontree Heath should be advanced as a matter of urgency, the planning impediments associated with the Leys and Central Park mean that development is unlikely to commence until well into 2010, assuming a positive outcome of the Local Development Framework process, which cannot be guaranteed.</p> <p><b>Wards Affected:</b> Heath, Whalebone, Valence, Village, River</p>	
<p><b>Implications</b></p> <p><b>Financial:</b></p> <p>The cost of the Leisure Facility is either £16.1 million or £14 million depending on the mix of facilities. A broad capital assessment suggests a funding gap between £9.8 million and £7.8 million.</p> <p>There is currently no provision within the Capital Programme for the replacement of Dagenham Swimming Pool.</p> <p>The consultant's who will undertake the Detailed Design Brief and Business Case are employed on a fixed fee basis which is being funded within existing Leisure Arts and Olympics Division's revenue budget.</p> <p><b>Legal:</b></p> <p>The Beacontree Heath site has a covenant prohibiting the sale of alcohol which may affect the Business Case for the operation of a Leisure Facility on this Site.</p> <p>No restrictive covenants were identified on the Leys or Central Park which would affect the development.</p>	

**Risk Management:**

Dagenham Swimming Pool is in need of replacement and there is a real risk that the pool may be forced to close without a replacement for swimming provision being available. Currently the pool is closed undergoing repairs to the roof. Further works will be needed to keep the facility open until a new pool is built.

**Social Inclusion and Diversity:**

There are no specific adverse impacts insofar as this report is concerned.

**Crime and Disorder:**

Althorne Way has experienced incidents of anti-social behaviour. The wider redevelopment of the Beacontree Heath Site affords the opportunity to address these concerns.

**Recommendation(s)**

The Executive is recommended to agree:

1. Beacontree Heath as the preferred site for the replacement of Dagenham Swimming Pool;
2. That a Business Case be progressed to explore all funding options including Public Private Partnership (PPP), Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Prudential Borrowing.

**Reason(s):**

To assist the Council in achieving all of its Community Priorities in particular, 'Improving health, housing and social care', 'Raising General Pride in the Borough', 'Making Barking and Dagenham cleaner, greener and safer', and 'Promoting equal opportunities and celebrating diversity'.

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**1. Introduction and Background**

1.1 This report considers site options for the replacement of Dagenham Swimming Pool.

1.2 The options being considered are:

- No replacement
- Beacontree Heath (the current location of Dagenham Swimming Pool)
- The Leys
- Central Park.

1.3 In replacing Dagenham Swimming Pool there is an opportunity to consider whether to replace the Wood Lane Sports Centre at the same time. This could be achieved by

creating a new wet and dry side facility thus allowing the disposal of the Wood Lane Site to obtain a capital receipt towards the costs of the replacement Leisure Centre.

## 2. The Leisure Mix

2.1 The Leisure mix to be considered within the replacement facility is detailed in the table below:

Functional Area	Leisure Option	
	1	2
25m pool – 8 lane	✓	✓
Seating (250-300)	✓	✓
Learner Pool (13mx6m)	✓	✓
Wet Change	✓	✓
Sports Hall (4 Court)	✓	
Multi Purpose Room	✓	
Studio (2)	✓	✓
Gym (65 stations)	✓	✓
Creche	✓	✓
Café	✓	✓
Reception	✓	✓
Dry Change	✓	✓
Community Space	✓	✓
Youth Space	✓	
Treatment/Referral Rooms (2)	✓	✓
Administration/Offices	✓	✓
Squash Courts	✓	
<b>Building Costs</b>	£16.1m	£14m

2.2 The key difference between the two options is the exclusion of the sports hall, ancillary activity and youth spaces from Option 2. These facilities, if included as in Option 1, would replace the core facilities from the Wood Lane Sports Centre, which could subsequently be disposed of following the opening of the new facility. The Leisure Asset Strategy 2006 supports the replacement of Wood Lane Sports Centre and illustrates a demand for a further 5 new sports halls within the Borough between now and 2012.

2.3 The inclusion of the core facilities from the Wood Lane site, as set out in Option 1, will enable the scheme to benefit from a capital receipt for the disposal of the Wood Lane site. It would also reduce the need to spend significant amounts of money on the Wood Lane Centre to keep it operational (circa £1.2 million over the next 5 years). Furthermore combining the facilities on to one site would deliver revenue savings and provide the opportunity to sell multifaceted memberships the value of which will be quantified within the Business Case.

2.4 There are other school sports facilities within the locality of Dagenham Pool and Wood Lane Sports Centre. However the nature of dual use agreements with schools prohibits daytime use by the public during term time. Also existing school facilities would not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the current evening and weekend usage at Wood Lane.

2.5 The Government has set a target to increase activity levels within the general population by 1% each year to combat the rising incidents of health problems associated with inactivity. The Leisure Asset Strategy has identified that there is a demand that exceeds current Sport Hall provision within the Borough. It is accepted that more use should be made of existing facilities including school sports halls. The Regeneration and Children's Services Department are working together to determine how collectively the Council and the schools can agree a pricing policy around leisure facilities which would help ensure that price is not a barrier to participation.

### 3. The Replacement Site Options

3.1 The advantages and disadvantages of **Beacontree Heath** as the replacement site for Dagenham Swimming Pool are detailed in the table below:

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
➤ Site within the Council's freehold ownership	➤ Pool potentially closed during development process (subject to site layout considerations).
➤ Revenue savings whilst pool is closed	
➤ A feasibility study has been completed	
➤ No planning impediments under the current UDP and the London Plan	
➤ Opportunity to comprehensively regenerate Beacontree Heath by integrating housing development with leisure provision	
➤ Highly visible site reinforcing the Council's investment in social infrastructure	
➤ Good connections with public transport particularly buses	
➤ Potential to explore Combined Heat and Power (CHP) in a mixed use scheme using the pool as a heat reservoir	
➤ Potentially on site in late 2007 subject to commitment to proceed and funding	

3.2 The advantages and disadvantages of **The Leys** as the replacement site for Dagenham Swimming Pool are detailed in the table below:

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
➤ Dagenham Swimming Pool could remain open during the development process	➤ The site is designated as Green Belt in the UDP. Therefore an application for a leisure facility

	would be a 'departure' and classed as 'inappropriate'
➤ The site is within the Council's Freehold ownership	➤ Through the Local Development Framework (LDF) process the site could be promoted for development through Site Specific Allocations but this could take until September 2009 before an application could be submitted under the new planning policy without any guarantees that proposed changes are accepted
➤ The current Dagenham Swimming Pool site is available for redevelopment	➤ Loss of Green Belt (unless an alternative site can be found to add to the Green Belt)
	➤ Site is poorly located for public transport with only one bus route
	➤ Site is isolated and may be subject to higher levels of vandalism.

3.4 The advantages and disadvantages of **Central Park** as the replacement site for Dagenham Swimming Pool are detailed in the table below:

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
➤ Dagenham Swimming Pool could remain open during the development process	➤ The site is designated as Green Belt in the UDP. Therefore an application for a leisure facility would be a 'departure' and classed as 'inappropriate'
➤ Site within the Council's freehold ownership	➤ Through the Local Development Framework (LDF) process the site could be promoted for development through Site Specific Allocations but this could take until September 2009 before an application could be submitted under the new planning policy without any guarantees that proposed changes are accepted
➤ Site well located to the Civic Centre allowing through careful design an enhanced park, leisure facility and civic provision	➤ Loss of Green Belt (unless an alternative site can be found to add to the Green Belt)
➤ Connections with public transport particularly buses	
➤ The current Dagenham Swimming Pool site is available for redevelopment	

## **4. Current Position**

- 4.1 A feasibility study has been undertaken for the Beacontree Heath Site. It demonstrates that the Leisure Facility can be located on the site and housing development can also be integrated providing a quality mixed use scheme.
- 4.2 The total number of housing units that can be accommodated on the Beacontree Heath Site is unaffected by the inclusion of the leisure facility although this will impact on the Housing form the site could accommodate.
- 4.3 If procurement of the replacement facility was to commence in September 2006, a planning application could be determined by July 2007 with site preparation starting in late 2007 and the new facility opening in the second half of 2009, early 2010.
- 4.4 Central Park and The Leys are both located within the Green Belt. If they are promoted as Site Specific Allocations the Sustainable Development Group Manager has advised that it would take until circa September 2009 to formally adopt the new planning arrangements if successful. There is a real risk that proposing any form of development in the Green Belt could generate passionate opposition from local people and environmental groups. The Mayor of London or the Secretary of State may block change of use. This would considerably delay the replacement of Dagenham Swimming Pool.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 Dagenham Swimming Pool is nearing the end of its useful life. It is currently undergoing repairs to its roof which affects the revenue budget as the pool is closed. Maintenance will continue to place a burden on the Council's finances unless the pool is closed or replaced.
- 5.2 Wood Lane Sports Centre is also an aging facility with an estimated budget of £1.2 million for maintenance over the next five years. The opportunity to co-locate wet and dry side facilities may also realise other savings relating to day-to-day operations.
- 5.3 The initial feasibility study on Beacontree Heath is demonstrating a capital funding gap between £9.8 and £7.8 million. A detailed Business Case will further examine these costs.
- 5.4 The Business Case will explore methods of addressing capital funding including Prudential Borrowing, PPP, PFI and any possible Grants.
- 5.5 The cost of the Business Case is within existing Leisure Arts and Olympics Division's budget.

## **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 The following Officers have been consulted during the preparation of this report:

### **Members**

Councillor Charles Fairbrass – Leader of the Council

Councillor Liam Smith – Deputy Leader of the Council  
Councillor Sidney Kallar – Lead Member Regeneration  
Councillor Bob Little – Lead Member Adult Social Services and Independent Living

### **Officers**

Jennifer Dearing – Corporate Director of Regeneration  
Jeremy Grint – Head of Spatial Regeneration  
Alex Anderson – Group Manager – Regeneration and Customer Services Finance  
Gordon Glenday – Spatial Planning and Environmental Sustainability Group Manager  
Ken Baikie – Group Manager – Area Regeneration  
Kevin Munnelly – Regeneration Manager  
Simon Farrow – Group Manager Parks and Leisure Development  
Allan Aubrey – Head of Leisure Arts and Olympics  
Ken Jones – Head of Housing Strategy  
Anthony Alexander – Housing Regeneration Manager  
Muhammad Saleem – Divisional Director of Legal Services  
Robin Hanton – Corporate Legal Manager

### **Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:**

- Leisure Asset Strategy June 2006
- Beacontree Heath Feasibility Study April 2006
- Beacontree Heath, Leisure Needs Assessment February 2006